

SECRET/SENSITIVE

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Call from Ben Welles re Nomination of DDCI

1. This morning Ben Welles, of the New York Times, called to ask if I could have lunch. I said I was leaving shortly on an out of town trip. He said he was calling with regard to information he had received from a reliable source to the effect that General Walters' nomination was being held up as a result of opposition from Senator Stennis, who opposed any military man for the position. I said I had no such information. Welles asked why the nomination had been held up so long. I pointed out this was a matter in which the President and Dr. Kissinger were interested and they were occupied with other things. I said the only thing I knew about the nominee or the nomination was from the rumor mill.

2. Welles asked if Senator Stennis had been in touch with the White House on the matter. I said I had no idea what, if anything, might have passed between Stennis and the White House. He asked whether there wasn't "considerable feeling" that the DDCI should be a civilian. I said I had heard the case argued both ways, but certainly there were good reasons for a military man in the position, since much of our work involved coordination with the military and dealt with military subjects. I said previous military incumbents had made an outstanding contribution, and I personally thought that the choice should be made on the qualifications of the individual rather than whether he was military or civilian.

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JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

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